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# HANDBOOK

*for*

# COLORADO SCHOOL DIRECTORS

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Prepared Jointly

by

COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

and

COLORADO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

COLORADO  
STATE DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION  
H. GRANT VEST, Commissioner



DENVER

1958



# HANDBOOK

FOR

# COLORADO SCHOOL DIRECTORS

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A Guide for Effective Membership in Local School Boards

---

*Prepared Jointly by*

COLORADO ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL BOARDS

1165 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado

Jess C. Christensen, President

John J. Coffelt, Executive Director

and

COLORADO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

State Office Building, Denver

H. Grant Vest, Commissioner

1958

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Inside of Back Cover Feature

“THE UNSUNG HERO”



# BOARDS OF EDUCATION — AMERICAN PLAN

## Why

Public education of all children and youth, without discrimination, lies at the heart of the American plan.

The success of our republican form of government, of our democratic way of life, and of our business and technological development depends upon a literate and alert citizenry.

One of the major duties of government is to provide an adequate system of tax-supported schools.

Chief responsibility for public education is vested in the several states but a large measure of local control through Boards of Education is everywhere deemed desirable, even essential.

Governors and state legislatures, without exception, are bound by state constitutions, by court decisions, and by tradition to establish and maintain public schools free from political entanglements and the domination of any special-interest or selfish-interest group.

Today, all states have set up standards for a minimum of twelve years of schooling at public expense.

## What

Boards of Education are the responsible governing bodies of the public schools.

They are designed as the policy-making groups in education and should be responsive to the needs and wishes of the citizens of their respective communities.

Boards are everywhere invested with far-reaching authority for a great variety of important decisions concerning the public schools.

They are the connecting link between the public which supports the schools and the professional personnel which administers the schools, and they are in a position to interpret each to the other.

Almost universally, members of Boards of Education serve without remuneration, except expenses; they are voluntary servants of the people—a striking example of democracy in action.

## Who

Other things being equal, the caliber of individual board members largely determines the adequacy and quality of the educational service they provide as a group.

High standards of personal integrity and successful accomplishment as American citizens are essential in the men and women who serve on Boards of Education, but it is also desirable that, severally, they should be the products of varying backgrounds and experience in human affairs.

Each should be chosen to represent impartially all the people of the community rather than any political, social, religious, economic or other vested interest or special area.

Board members should possess abounding physical health, sound mental balance, and great social poise, and should be willing to devote their time freely to a study of the problems of the schools.

Their views should be tolerant, their cooperation generous, their minds open, their judgments considered.

They should evidence a profound interest in the children of the community as a whole, and not in one particular segment or faction.

They should develop a sympathetic understanding of the teaching and learning process as it involves the human relationships between those who would teach and those who would learn.

Above all, members of Boards of Education should be men and women who hold universal public education in greatest esteem; who believe that America's future rests primarily on the superior development—physical, mental, moral, spiritual—of our children and youth for personal, social, economic, and civic competence; and who will work unremittingly to provide, defend, and support the highest degree of public education which their respective communities can be persuaded to demand.

*Prepared by the*

NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

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## *Dear School Board Member:*

Your acceptance of election to your local board of education attests your willingness and civic obligation to assume responsibilities which are of major concern to you and your community. School board responsibilities require maximum personalized attention. These duties cannot be avoided; they cannot be delegated.

Many members of boards of education assume the role with only a general knowledge of educational affairs. It is important to know what it means to be a good school board member. There is much to learn, initially, in becoming an effective member of a local school board. It takes time, talent, effort and interest.

Your devotion to the cause of good education, in maintaining and advancing the philosophy of educational opportunity for everyone, will be without financial or remunerative rewards. In fact, there may be monetary loss to you personally, in the time and service devoted to your school board position.

But, in spite of the herculean task before you, take pride in the assignment you have accepted. Membership on a local school board is an honor, and a tribute to you as an individual. It means that in your community, your friends and neighbors have selected you, above all others, for a position where judgment and integrity are prime requisites. They have demonstrated confidence in your ability, and entrust to you the responsibility for the vital decisions affecting the future lives of their sons and daughters.

In fulfilling your legal, civic and moral obligations, it is important that you understand what will be required of you, and that you keep abreast of the latest developments and trends in education.

This pamphlet is intended as a guide for you, in your role as a local school board member. It will provide you with factual information on how to proceed in your most immediate ambition—to be a truly effective school board member!

JESS C. CHRISTENSON,  
*President, Colorado Association of School Boards*

## *Dear School Board Member:*

This brochure has been prepared to assist school board members to become more familiar with their role as a leader in school government. Someone has maintained that "the ideal school board member must have the wisdom of King Solomon and must be able to accomplish everything quickly and cheaply."

Neal Gross, Director of the Harvard University School of Executive Studies, once commented that the ideal school board member should be equipped as follows:

1. A heart of gold, a mind of steel and a nervous system of elastic.
2. A built-in telephone holder on one shoulder and a tear absorber on the other.
3. The ability to make wise and penetrating decisions on subjects he doesn't know anything about.
4. The desire to be hooked by educational jargon.
5. The ability to tell parents that a straight line for a school bus is not necessarily door to door.
6. The connections to buy aspirin at 50 per cent discount.
7. A notion of how to increase salaries, build new buildings, and lower the tax rate—all at the same time.
8. The wisdom to steer a course between the horse-and-buggy and space ship schools of education, without splitting the personality of the child.

We believe that few civic positions offer greater opportunity for service than the challenging work of the school board member. Few experiences in any governmental activity will ever be more personally rewarding than the work of a school board member. Any job to be done well or with satisfaction to the individual requires a full understanding of the scope and nature of the task.

This booklet has been prepared in the hope it will contribute in a small way to a fuller understanding of the task of the school board member.

H. GRANT VEST,  
*Commissioner of Education*

# *Section 1*

*General Functions,  
Responsibilities.  
And Liabilities*



## *Section 1*

### GENERAL FUNCTIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES, LIABILITIES

(Elbie Gann, Director of Secondary Education, Colorado State Department of Education)

American public education today needs courageous leadership of a nature that only board members can provide. Although the professional educator's views are respected and accepted, in the final analysis Americans adhere to the pattern of non-professional lay leadership of public education.

No other country in the world has a comparable system of citizen control of education. Approximately a quarter of a million Americans serve on school boards—for the most part, without pay and as a public service. They come from every walk of life—doctors, dentists, lawyers, merchants, bankers, housewives, and just plain people.

The acceptance of election to the local board of education entails responsibilities which cannot be avoided or delegated. Although there are many such responsibilities, five areas are basic of school board obligation to which the board must give genuine attention to fulfill its statutory and legal duties.

#### FIVE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

**Evaluation**—Evaluation and constant re-examination of the entire local school system constitute one of the major jobs of the lay school board. The school board should maintain thorough and continuous review of the entire school system so that board members at all times possess a factual working knowledge of all phases of school operation. This involves periodic analysis of finance, administration, instruction, school services, facilities, and personnel. These reviews should be systematically arranged in cooperation with the superintendent and the staff, and may include citizens' advisory groups, if so desired.

**Interpretation**—School patrons and citizens will have more confidence in, and give more support to, the school board and the school system when they are kept continuously informed about the program and activities of the school. The public must have opportunity to know that all actions of the board reflect a consistent, well-established and publicly endorsed set of operating policies. In public relations channels, the board must provide clear two-way communication system between the board and the community.

Favorable contact with the community imposes two obligations on school boards. The *first* obligation is the necessity for



having a basic operating structure which the public readily understands, and to which the public will respond favorably. The *second* is the development of a plan which will enable the citizens of the community to participate personally in some school affairs.

**In-Service Training**—Few people today can meet either their own or public expectations as board members without spending time and effort to prepare themselves for their work on the school board. This becomes more and more essential as the district increases in size and as school problems mount in complexity. It is important that the individual board member keep continuously abreast of the latest developments and trends in education, and by that procedure develops himself to serve as an effective board member.

**State and National Educational Policy**—School boards, as agents of the state, have a responsibility for assisting in the formulating and developing of state educational policy. Local experiences in education provide the most reliable guides to state and national educational practices. Because they are locally elected lay citizens, contributing their time and services voluntarily, school directors are in opportune position to determine the true scholastic needs of the children. Two of the media for discharge of this responsibility are the state and national school board associations.

**Long-Range Planning**—Another important responsibility for school board leadership is in the area of long-range educational planning. The school board which permits its educational program to develop only on a day-to-day basis jeopardizes the community's preparation to meet future needs. Only through proper planning procedures by the board can a community continue to provide the best possible educational program commensurate with the needs and desires of local people and with the financial ability of the district.

**General Functions**—Local school board functions are typically divided into three categories, namely, ministerial functions, quasi-judicial functions, and quasi-legislative functions. Ministerial functions generally refer to those which are mere fulfillments of the law and, in general, may be delegated by a board. Quasi-judicial and quasi-legislative functions, in general, may not be delegated. An example of quasi-judicial authority is the power to expel a child from school. An example of the quasi-legislative function is the power of the board to make and adopt by-laws and policies governing the operation and conduct of school affairs.

## DUTIES OF SCHOOL BOARDS

### 1. Legal status—

The constitution of Colorado provides in Article IX, Section 15, for the organization of school districts and the establishment of a board of education of three or more members to be



elected in each district. Each board of education shall have "control of instruction in the public schools of their respective districts."

## 2. **Legislative provision—**

Every board of education, unless otherwise especially provided by law, has the power, and it is its duty to:

- (a) Employ and discharge teachers and other employees; fix and pay wages; determine rate of tuition for non-resident pupils.
- (b) Control terms of admission for non-residents; waive tuition if necessary for the welfare of the child.
- (c) Fix the course of study and enforce rules and regulations of the Commissioner of Education.
- (d) Adopt textbooks.
- (e) Provide school furniture and all else needed in school, or for the use of the school board.
- (f) Rent, repair, and insure school buildings.
- (g) Build or remove school buildings and purchase or sell school buildings and lots when so directed by vote of the electors.
- (h) Hold in trust for district all property for benefit of the schools thereof.
- (i) Suspend or expel pupils who refuse to obey school rules, and exclude from school children under age of six.
- (j) Provide books for children proved indigent, and furnish textbooks to all pupils when so directed by a vote of the electors.
- (k) Require pupils to have proper books as a condition of membership in school.
- (l) Exclude immoral publications from school.
- (m) Require teachers to conform to the law.
- (n) Make annual reports, in the proper manner, to the county superintendent on or before the first day of August.
- (o) Make direct reports to the Commissioner of Education when so directed by him.
- (p) Pay tuition.

Boards of education have some additional powers and duties which are provided because of the class of the district, or which may be obtained by sufficient affirmative vote of the electorate. The special or different powers and duties which come about because of the class of a district or because of special elections are too numerous to list. Answers to

specific questions can be obtained from "Colorado School Laws" or from "The Handbook of Colorado School Law," both available from the Colorado State Department of Education.

### 3. Limitations—

One basic limitation relating to members of boards of education is that the decisions and actions of a single member can not be binding on the entire board. Boards of education must exercise their powers and duties only in properly called meetings.

There are some requirements regarding the manner in which board meetings must be called and conducted. These provisions are found in Senate Bill 104, 1957, and in "The Handbook of Colorado School Law," pages 10 and 11.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL BOARDS

### 1. Legal—

It cannot be emphasized strongly enough that for every school board power there is a commensurate responsibility. For example, a board of education has the *power* to pay tuition but, when the situation warrants, the board has the *responsibility* to pay tuition. It follows that if a board of education does not have the power to perform a duty, it does not have the responsibility to perform.

### 2. Relationship of one member to the entire board of education—

One member can not act for the entire board unless such member has received special authorization by board resolution, and that resolution is duly recorded in the minutes of a legally-called meeting. Such action is very unusual and should be taken with extreme care, and only in special situations. Perhaps one of the most specific of all the laws is that which prevents the board of education from entering into a contract which may benefit a member. For example, it is illegal for the board of education to employ one of its members to drive a school bus for the district. All bus drivers must enter into a contract for their services.

## LIABILITIES OF BOARDS, EMPLOYEES

### 1. School board liability—

Generally speaking, the board of education can not be held liable. However, there are specific circumstances in which the courts have determined the liability of a board of education. The only basic statement which can be made concerning liability is this general rule: The board ordinarily is not liable, but when specific cases are brought into court, each case will

be decided on its own merits. It is advisable to obtain legal counsel when liability is in doubt.

**2. Personal liability and employee liability—**

The same generalities about liability of the board of education pertain also to the question of liability of individual board members and the employees of the district. For specific situations, in which a board member or an employee might be held liable, see item 5, page 15, "Handbook of Colorado School Law."



## *Section 2*

### *Relationships of School Boards and Local Superintendent*





## *Section 2*

### RELATIONSHIPS OF SCHOOL BOARDS AND LOCAL SUPERINTENDENT

(Leslie K. Grimes, Superintendent of Schools, Greeley, Colorado)

The efficient operation of a school system depends on the teamwork which exists between the board of education and the superintendent of schools. The board of education has the legal responsibility, as representative of the people, to develop and formulate the policies which will provide for a sound program of education for the children of the district. The superintendent of schools is a professionally-prepared person who serves as an advisor to the board, and as its chief executive officer. In general, the function of the board of education is in the fields of legislation and evaluation while the superintendent's responsibilities are primarily executive and advisory.

#### RELATIONSHIP OF BOARD TO SUPERINTENDENT

**Selection of the Superintendent**—One of the most important functions of the school board is the selection of a qualified superintendent of schools. The caliber of the person so selected will play an important part in determining the kind of school system that will be developed. The board should make every effort to secure the best superintendent that the resources of the system will permit.

In selecting its chief executive officer, the board should make a careful job description of the duties, responsibilities, and functions of the superintendent and a clear statement of the relationships existing between the board and the superintendent. The members of the board should agree upon the desired personal characteristics they are looking for in their superintendent. They should notify placement bureaus of colleges and universities of the vacancy, and submit the requirements for the position, and state the salary that will be paid.

After nominations have been received, the credentials of all likely candidates should be screened carefully. Interviews should be arranged with three or four of the most promising candidates. If it is possible, a committee from the board should personally investigate the two or three most likely candidates, by visiting their school systems.

In the search for a superintendent, the board should not overlook any professional person within the present local staff who may possess the qualities desired. A local person, however, should not be automatically favored over candidates from the outside. The board's obligation is to secure the best person pos-

sible for the position without regard to whether or not he comes from within or without the system.

Ward G. Reeder, in his book, "School Boards and Superintendents," states some of the qualities which boards should look for in their superintendent:

*" . . . The following are the chief qualifications which should be sought in prospective superintendents by all school boards: moral character; pleasing personality; ability as a public speaker; good health; courage and a reasonable amount of aggressiveness; ability to cooperate with other people; an excellent general education and special preparation in school administration; evidence of sane progressiveness and of an otherwise sound philosophy of education; and a year or more of successful experience in some other teaching, supervisory, or administrative position."*

**Policy Formulation vs. Policy Execution**—Policy formulation is an inherent responsibility of the board of education. Boards of education should seek the advice and counsel of the professionally-trained superintendent in this process. The educational program will be greatly affected by the kind of policies under which the professional staff may work. Educational policies should reflect the best thinking of the citizens in the community. The superintendent may be able to aid the board in reflecting the popular will by bringing to it policies as determined in other good school systems.

After policies have been formulated and adopted, boards of education should vest authority in the superintendent to put them into effect, and should support him in the execution of these policies. Davies and Prestwood, in their book, "Practical School Board Procedures," sum up the matter of policy execution as follows:

*"Using the experience of the superintendent, then, means that the board gives its superintendent the authority to carry out his task as the chief executive officer of the school system. It means that the board will not interfere with the superintendent's activities unless he fails to carry out its policies effectively. It means that the board will support him wholeheartedly when he is doing the job that the execution of its policies requires."*

While some activities are clearly the responsibility of the board of education, and others of the superintendent of schools, there are many activities where the separate functions of the two parties are not so clearly defined. It is in this realm of activities where responsibilities are not clearly defined that a high degree of cooperation and understanding must exist between the board and the superintendent.

**Delegation of Authority**—While the board cannot delegate certain of its statutory obligations, it should delegate most of its administrative responsibilities to the superintendent. It may be necessary for the board to perform some administrative functions during the time that a new superintendent is becoming familiar with the community and its educational program, but administrative responsibilities should be delegated to him as soon as his professional competency has been demonstrated.

**Selection of Personnel**—The board of education has the legal responsibility for electing school personnel. The superintendent should be charged with the responsibility for nominating qualified persons to the board for election. He should be held responsible for the proper assignment and in-service growth of all personnel. In large school systems, he may be given a special assistant to work in the personnel field.

The quality of instruction in the public schools will be no better than the personnel employed. One of the most important duties of the superintendent is to insist that competent people are employed and properly assigned.

## RELATIONSHIP OF BOARD TO OTHER SCHOOL PERSONNEL

**Administrators**—The number of administrators in a school system will depend largely on the size and organization of the district. In small districts, there may be only one or two principals in addition to the superintendent, while in large systems, there may be many principals, assistant principals, assistant superintendents, and supervisors to carry on the administrative work of the system. Each of these administrators is responsible directly to the superintendent of schools, and should look to him for leadership, advice, and support. The members of the board of education should be careful that all official dealings with these administrators are carried on through the superintendent. This does not mean that a very cordial personal relationship should not exist between individual administrators and board members, but there is an obligation on the part of both to respect the normal channels of communication and authority. Failure to do so may result in serious misunderstanding.

**Teachers**—Teachers are elected to their positions originally by the board of education on the recommendation of the superintendent of schools. Their reelection annually, or dismissal during the probationary period, is also based on the recommendation of the superintendent. The board formulates and adopts personnel policies relating to teachers and their work with the assistance of the superintendent. The superintendent should give opportunity to the teaching staff to participate in the formulation of recommendations concerning policies that directly affect them. The



official relationships between teachers and the board should be carried on through the established channel of administrative authority, namely, through the principal and the superintendent to the board.

**Non-Certified Personnel**—The non-certified personnel in the various school systems range from very few to a great many, depending on the size of the district and the number of services provided. Included in this classification are the custodians, bus drivers, clerical staff, health personnel, lunchroom personnel, etc. In the selection of the non-certificated personnel, the same general procedures should be employed as in the selection of all other personnel in the system. Again, the assignment of duties should be delegated to the superintendent and his administrative staff. Channels of communication should be maintained as with the rest of the staff.

## THE SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER'S CREED

The following School Board Member's Creed was prepared by the Epsilon Field Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa, Los Angeles, in 1939, and should be helpful to a school board member in working with the superintendent and his staff:

- I will hold the superintendent of schools responsible for the administration of the schools.*
- I will give the superintendent of schools authority commensurate with his responsibility.*
- I will expect the schools to be administered by the best trained technical and professional people it is possible to procure.*
- I will elect employees only on the recommendation of the superintendent.*
- I will participate in board legislation only after considering the recommendation of the superintendent and only after he has furnished complete information supporting his recommendations.*
- I will expect the superintendent of schools to keep the board of education adequately informed at all times through both oral and written reports.*
- I will expect to spend more time in board meetings on educational programs and procedures than on business detail.*
- I will give the superintendent of schools friendly counsel and advice.*
- I will refer all complaints to the proper administrative officer or insist that they be presented in writing to the board as a whole.*

*I will present any personal criticisms of employees to the superintendent.*

*I will provide adequate safeguards around the superintendent and other personnel so they may perform their proper functions on a professional basis.*

## SUMMARY

The school board-superintendent relationships have evolved into a concept of strong partnership. The duties of the board are those expressly written in the statutes, legislative and policy making, and evaluation of the total educational system. The duties of the superintendent have been defined as ministerial and executive. The board members, in hiring a superintendent, express confidence in him as their chief administrative officer and should support him in his efforts. Likewise, the superintendent should support his board in its efforts.

All board policies should be clearly defined and understood. The board and superintendent should make every effort to secure the best personnel available, and provide adequate building and instructional facilities in order to insure the best possible educational program for their community.

Cooperation and teamwork should be stressed throughout the entire educational system to work toward a sound, economic, and efficient school system.





## *Section 3*

# *Partnership Role In Local and State School Administration*



## Section 3

### PARTNERSHIP ROLE IN LOCAL-STATE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

(John H. Swenson, Assistant Commissioner of Education, State of Colorado)

One of the first and perhaps most forceful impressions a school board member receives upon assuming his duties is that education in our American society has deep-rooted traditions of local control. One or two phone calls or conversations with irate parents or taxpayers will soon convince a school board member that the schools are locally operated and controlled.

At the same time, the school board member will learn that all of the people in the state have an interest in and a basic responsibility for the education of every child in the state, regardless of school district boundaries. He will learn that the people of the state, acting through their state legislature and the State Department of Education, do carry out their responsibilities in various ways which affect each local school district. One of the most common ways in which the people exercise their responsibility for the education of all children is by requiring statewide minimum standards for licensing teachers, transporting school pupils, financing schools, accreditation of schools, etc.

It may seem at first glance that the school board member is caught in an impossible situation—being torn between both his local and statewide responsibilities. No one can serve two masters well. The school board member is no exception to this rule. However, if the school board member will take the time to review the legal framework which the people of Colorado have established for providing public education, he will find that his problem is resolved by the law. He will discover that he is a member of a true partnership wherein each of the partners—state and community—assumes and exercises its appropriate legal responsibilities and functions. Although this legal framework has been criticized as being cumbersome at times, experience has proven that this system provides the checks and balances which are an essential part of a democratic society wherein free men govern themselves.

The people of Colorado have defined the relationships of the parties to this local-state partnership through certain provisions of their State Constitution and through laws enacted by their state legislature. For example, Article IX, Section 2, of the Colorado Constitution charges the state legislature with the broad responsibility of establishing and maintaining free public education for the people of the state, as follows:

*“The general assembly shall, as soon as practicable, provide for the establishment and maintenance of a thorough and uniform system of free public schools throughout the*

*state, wherein all residents of the state, between the ages of six and twenty-one years, may be educated gratuitously . . .”*

The Constitution, in Section 15 of Article IX, further requires the legislature to put the local-state partnership on an operating basis by organizing local school districts and local school boards:

*“The general assembly shall, by law, provide for organization of school districts of convenient size, in each of which shall be established a board of education, to consist of three or more directors to be elected by the qualified electors of the district. Said directors shall have control of instruction in the public schools of their respective districts.”*

From the Constitution, we can see that the legislature clearly has the power to determine the number and nature of school districts which may be organized and to delegate the various powers which local school boards may exercise. However, it is equally clear that the local school board is a constitutional body and, as such, is the partner with the responsibility for operating the state's school system at the local level and having specific constitutional authority for control of instruction in the schools of the district.

Over the years, the legislature has carried out its responsibility for establishing and maintaining a system of free public schools by enacting legislation concerning the organization of school districts, election of school boards, delegating powers and duties to school boards, financing the school program, etc. In more recent years, the legislature has exhibited an increasing concern that this school system be thorough and uniform in all districts of the state by providing a larger measure of state support and by requiring that local school boards operate the schools in a manner which will insure at least a minimum standard of educational program. Local school boards, by exercising the broad, general powers delegated to them, have operated the schools at a prescribed level and, in many instances, have exceeded the required minimum program. Indeed, much of our progress in education today is due to the initiative and experimentation of local educational leaders who are supported by an informed school board and interested lay citizens.

Public education in Colorado will continue to be effective and to improve only so long as each of the partners is able to carry out the proper functions. On the one hand, the state must look out for the interests of all school children and must demand a minimum level of educational opportunity while guaranteeing a minimum level of financial support. On the other hand, local school boards must manage the affairs of the school districts in an efficient manner and exert a vigorous local initiative as well as local control.

## WHY A STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION?

As the school board member gains a more complete understanding of the legal framework for administering public education, he can see that the State Department of Education is a vital member of the local-state partnership. In a highly decentralized type of school government such as ours, effective school administration requires general, statewide supervision of the school program. General supervision safeguards the state's interest in the education of its people and provides statewide perspective in matters affecting education by providing state-level leadership, planning and research services, and regulatory functions.

The specific responsibilities of general supervision should include:

- (1) Regulating and coordinating a statewide, decentralized system of education which is operated by local governing boards;
- (2) Establishing rules, regulations, and standards for the conduct of locally operated educational programs in order to implement the educational policies established by law;
- (3) Prescribing a comprehensive, statewide system of educational reports and conducting a thorough analysis of such reports;
- (4) Reviewing and approving budgets of local governing boards;
- (5) Conducting and stimulating research pertinent to the state's educational program;
- (6) Disseminating information on desirable educational practices;
- (7) Providing consultative and advisory services to local school districts, institutional agencies, and their staffs;
- (8) Initiating and conducting in-service training programs for local and state school officials and their staffs;
- (9) Chartering, accrediting, and evaluating educational institutions for the state.

In order to preserve a sound state-level administration of public education, this "general supervision" should be provided by a single state educational agency. The state school agency should have the same kind of autonomy provided local districts. The state school office should be staffed with top educational leaders. Consequently, in 1948, the people of Colorado placed the responsibility for the general supervision of the schools of the state in an elected state board of education, as provided in Section 1, Article IX, of the Constitution:

*"The general supervision of the public schools of the state shall be vested in a board of education whose powers and duties shall be as now hereafter prescribed by law . . ."*



The legislature, in 1949, provided for the organization of the State Department of Education as presently constituted and set forth in detail the powers and duties of the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education.

Thus, the general supervisory responsibility of the state is carried out by the various officers and other personnel in the Department of Education in accord with policies established by the State Board of Education.

School board members will find it interesting and profitable to review the organization of the Department of Education and the specific statutory powers and duties of the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education as provided in the school laws. (See 123-1, "School Laws of Colorado, 1956," pp. 16-23.) Among the more important powers of the Commissioner which can be of particular assistance to local school boards is " . . . decide all points by touching the construction of the school laws which may be submitted to him in writing by any school officer . . . " These rulings of the Commissioner of Education are held to be correct and final until set aside by the courts.

## USING STATE-LEVEL SERVICES

In order to provide consultative and advisory services to local school boards, the State Board of Education has employed a staff of professionally competent persons who have highly specialized training and experience in various educational fields. The services of these staff members are available to local school boards upon request to assist local school officials in planning for the organization and operation of the local educational program.

It should be emphasized that these services are not a substitute for the professional services provided by the local superintendent of schools and his staff or other professional services (legal, engineering, architectural, etc.) which the local board may employ from time to time. State-level services are intended as an additional resource for local school officials in studying problems, planning the various aspects of the educational program, and developing the best operational procedures. The professional staff of the Department of Education is prepared to render a broad range of consultative and advisory services in the following areas and levels of the educational program:

<b>Elementary Education</b>	<b>School Budgets</b>
<b>Secondary Education</b>	<b>Fiscal Accounting and Reporting</b>
<b>Junior Colleges</b>	<b>Pupil Accounting and Reporting</b>
<b>Adult Education</b>	<b>Federal Aids</b>
<b>Vocational Education</b>	<b>School Plant Planning</b>
<b>Special Education</b>	<b>Pupil Transportation</b>



**Library Services**  
**Conservation Education**  
**Guidance Services**  
**Audio-Visual Education**  
**Curriculum Services**  
**Mental Health and Special  
Institutions**

**Teacher Education and  
Certification**  
**Legal Services**  
**School Lunch Services**  
**School District Organization**  
**Research Services**  
**Education of Migrant  
Children**

Local school boards should feel free at any time to request assistance from the Commissioner of Education and his staff. However, to be most helpful, the request for assistance should be made as early as possible in the first stages of study and planning for the initiation or revision of local educational programs. Newly elected school boards in school districts reorganized under the provisions of Senate Bill 385 will find it particularly helpful to request the assistance of the Department of Education as they begin their planning for the educational program to be provided in the new school district.



## *Section 4*

# *Board Relations With Official, Quasi-Official Regulatory Organizations*



## *Section 4*

### BOARD RELATIONS WITH OFFICIAL AND QUASI-OFFICIAL REGULATORY ORGANIZATIONS

#### North Central Association

(Stephen Romine, Professor of Education, University of Colorado)

The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools is a non-incorporated, voluntary organization for colleges and secondary schools. These member schools have a mutual interest in the extension of educational opportunity in the area which the Association serves. This area includes nineteen states and American Dependents' Schools of the Armed Services around the world. The states encompassed are as follows: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Ohio, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Total membership as of July, 1957, included 388 collegiate institutions and 3,416 secondary schools. Of these, twelve colleges and universities and 108 secondary schools are located in Colorado.

Requirements for membership in the NCA are formulated and approved by member schools and serve as guidelines to efficient and effective school operation. Within each state the program of accreditation is administered by an elected committee of school administrators, subject to the approval of the NCA at large. Unlike most other states, the Colorado committee includes a school board member designated by the Colorado Association of School Boards, and the Colorado Congress of Parents and Teachers, Incorporated, has liaison representatives to the committee. These provisions were made to promote mutual understanding and cooperation.

School boards should consider the NCA as one of their staunchest allies for better education. Board members should become acquainted with an NCA publication, "Policies, Regulations, and Criteria" which discusses the basis for ratings and the minimum desired qualifications for accreditation. By studying this and other publications, board members will understand more exactly what the NCA offers for their schools. Board members should also seek from NCA information about accreditation, status and obligations of member schools, function and composition of the state committee, and related matters. In this the NCA and local school administrators share responsibility, but board members may not merely wait for information. They should act to become completely informed of the relationships their schools have, or may have, with the North Central Association.

The success of the accreditation program and its value rest largely with local schools, which in large measure, reflect what their boards of education have planned them to be. Boards should make provision for and expect the administrators of their member high schools to be active in NCA affairs, including attendance at the annual meeting. These administrators should discuss NCA matters of interest and concern with the board of education. In this way the advice and recommendations of boards of education may be heard and the NCA accreditation program will serve more effectively and be understood better.

Because of their application to many schools in many states, the policies, regulations, and criteria of the NCA tend to be general and minimal. Consequently, each board of education should endeavor to have their member schools operate in a manner which surpasses the requirements.

In Colorado, and in other states, the NCA hopes to be of real service to the cause of sound education. If this can be kept in mind by all who work with and in the Association, it will assist in maintaining the cooperative working relationships upon which the contribution of the NCA depends.

### **Colorado High School Activities Association**

(Glenn Wilson, CHSAA Commissioner)

The Colorado High School Activities Association is the instrument through which the public high schools of the state work in organizing and conducting the interschool activities program. The purpose of the organization is to approve, develop, and supervise among the member schools all interschool activities that contribute to or are a part of a well-rounded and meaningful educational experience at the secondary school level.

A public high school becomes a member of the Association by decision of its local board of education or high school committee. Any rights or interests resulting from membership belong to the school district in which a member school is located.

Since interschool activities are considered a part of the total educational program, they are organized and conducted by the same school officials who have responsibility for the other parts of the educational program, as delegated by local boards of education. All contacts by the Colorado High School Activities Association and member schools are channeled through the school official designated by each board as its chief administrative officer.

The program which Colorado high schools conduct through the C.H.S.A.A. includes athletic, student council, music, speech, journalism, and similar activities. The yearly programs in each of these activity areas and the rules and regulations under which the programs are operated are developed and approved by a Board of Control made up of representatives from the 37 leagues that are a part of the state organization. After the programs and rules



and regulations have been established by this Board of Control, the program for each year is organized and conducted by an Executive Committee which is composed of representatives from each of eight geographic districts within the state, the Colorado Commissioner of Education or his representative, and the president of the Colorado Association of School Boards.

Although responsibility for the organization and operation of interschool activities is placed with the Executive Committee, the actual work connected with the program is performed by a staff employed by the committee. This staff includes a commissioner, an assistant commissioner, and secretarial and clerical helpers.

The Colorado High School Activities Association is financed for the most part by funds obtained from two sources. About one-third of the cost of the state program is provided by service fees paid by the member schools that benefit from the services. The service fee for each school is determined by the enrollment of the school. Fees range from \$20 per year for small schools to \$120 for the very large schools. The remaining two-thirds of the cost of the state interschool program comes from income from the state basketball tournaments.

The constitution and by-laws of the C.H.S.A.A. and all rules and regulations are contained in a handbook, a copy of which is on file in the office of the superintendent or principal of each school. The budget for the Association is prepared by the Executive Committee and presented to the Board of Control for adjustment and approval in April of each year. The budget, as approved, is printed, and a copy sent to each member school prior to the time that it becomes effective and before a school is expected to renew its membership for the following school year.

Member schools are kept informed regarding Association business through financial reports, the minutes of important meetings, and informational articles in a magazine, "The Inter-Scholastic." Each member school is provided with several copies of this magazine.

The principal or superintendent of each school has on file in his office a great deal of information regarding the C.H.S.A.A. Additional information can be secured by writing to the Commissioner, 1605 Pennsylvania, Denver 3, Colorado. The Association has prepared some special publications containing information about interschool activities, organization charts of the state association, and similar material. These special publications are sent to school board members and school patrons whenever requested.

### Relationships in Field of Legislation

(Shelby Harper, Former Director of Colorado Legislative Council)

In view of the fact that most of the "ground rules" under which school board members must operate are in the form of statutes which have been enacted by the legislature, it is evident

that school directors have an important stake every time the Colorado General Assembly convenes.

This is particularly so when consideration is given to the total of state dollars which assist in financing the school district for which they are responsible.

Therefore, it would appear that the school director should take a very active part in joining with the directors of other districts through the state in (1) preparing and presenting to the legislature such proposed legislation as is felt to be necessary for achieving the type of educational environment which school board members believe is desirable, and (2) evaluating legislative measures which are "in the hopper" in order that they may be able to secure desirable amendments thereto or even complete defeat of any proposals which they do not feel are in the best interest of schools.

Perhaps one of the most successful ways in which the school board member can conduct his relationship with the legislative branch is to concentrate on the legislators who represent the area of which his school district is a part. The school director should go out of his way to make himself acquainted with his legislators and to make certain that his legislators have an understanding of the "make-up" of the school program in his district and also of what is believed needed in the way of legislation, financial and otherwise, in order to achieve the type of educational environment that people of that district desire. This should be a continuing process—not something that takes place a week or two prior to the session or only during the session, but rather, these contacts should be a month-in and month-out effort.

The Legislative Council, through its Committee on Education, presents another method whereby the district director may effectively make his thoughts known, regarding legislative matters.

This continuing research program is anxious to include first-hand information as to what school board members are thinking of in terms of school legislation.

*Section 5*

*Guiding Principles  
For Effective Role  
In Board Membership*



## *Section 5*

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE BOARD MEMBERSHIP

(Calvin Grieder, Professor of Education, University of Colorado)

#### Learning the Job on the Job

Experienced school board members say that it takes about two years to learn the job. Most board members freely admit that they enter upon board service with only a general knowledge of educational affairs. There is much to learn to become good serviceable members, and it takes time, effort and interest to learn it.

One handicap is that there is little or no pre-service training. This is common to many areas of public service. Generally speaking, men and women elected to serve on governmental boards, including boards of education, have to devote quite a bit of time and energy to learning the ropes during the early part of their service.

A potentially excellent board member must possess or develop a willingness to learn, an attitude favorable to surrendering whatever preconceptions he may have in the light of new knowledge and new conditions. Schools and school systems everywhere are different from those which school board members themselves attended as children. Problems and procedures of today are different from those of a generation ago. New board members, along with all the rest of us, may well pray, as Milton did in beginning that monumental and inspiring work, "*Paradise Lost*," "What is dark in me illumine, what is low raise and support."

All this does not mean that a school board member should not possess convictions about public school policies and procedures. It does mean that he should be able to change his mind, if the evidence warrants it, and not stubbornly cling to out-moded beliefs in blind disregard of facts and conditions of our times.

It is not easy to accept new understandings. It is not easy to free oneself from "hardened concepts" about American schools and their administration.

For example, it is difficult to comprehend that a teacher's salary now would have to be about \$4,500 in order to equal the purchasing power of a salary of \$2,400 in 1947.

As another example, the widely accepted standard of 30 square feet per pupil in elementary schoolrooms is 50 per cent higher than the 20 square feet which was standard only a few years ago.

The organization of larger units of administration to achieve educational and financial advantages is still another area where time-honored practice may have to yield to the demands of new conditions.



The regular work of board membership takes quite a bit of time. It is not uncommon for board members to devote to board work and related activities the equivalent of 20 to 25 eight-hour days per year. For new board members seriously interested in doing the best they can, even more time during the first year or two must be taken from their regular business or profession.

### Ingredients of Success

From what has been discussed, three points stand out for a good school board member:

*(1) A person must be interested in the schools;*

*(2) One must be willing (and able) to give the time and put forth the effort necessary to learn the job on the job;*

*(3) A board member must have an open mind on the development of policies and practices for meeting contemporary educational needs.*

In addition to these points, two other factors should be mentioned:

*First*, it is very important that anyone who is elected or appointed to a board and accepts this designation should be able to attend regular and special meetings of the board. Anyone whose health, occupation, conflicting activities, or place of residence prevent him from faithful attendance does not qualify as a good board member. While this precept is important for all board members, it is especially weighty for members of boards consisting of only three members.

*Secondly*, a board member must remember at all times that he is only one of a group. He can not speak for the board or commit the board in any way unless he is specifically directed to do so, and the minutes show it. This is one of the hardest things for board members to learn. The development of a feeling of board membership, with the give and take of discussion on many topics, takes considerable time. There is no room on a school board for the "prima donna." A school board works as a unit, and its acts are not the acts of individuals but the acts of a board. Every member is obligated to support the actions taken by his board, whether or not he voted for them.

Frequently, board members are approached by individual citizens, including teachers, who want support for some particular thing, or perhaps want some proposal killed, or who have some complaint. Board members may listen courteously to such advances, but it is improper for them to commit the board or promise any specific action. It is proper, however, to suggest the appropriate channels through which individuals should work before approaching the board.



## Many Sources of Help

Fortunately, there is an almost unlimited wealth of opportunities available to new board members to help them master the new job.

In districts which employ superintendents of schools, much of the responsibility for the orientation of new board members rests with the superintendent along with the president of the board. In other districts the board president (unless he is himself a new member) and the county superintendent of schools should assume this duty.

A number of the methods which have proved helpful can be used whether or not a superintendent is employed, although most of them can be carried on better with the assistance and leadership of the superintendent. As chief administrator of the school system he receives a great deal of information about educational affairs in general and should have readily available complete information on all aspects of the local schools. These helpful methods include:

1. A wise first step for the new board member is to read carefully the written policies of the board and the minutes of board meetings held during the preceding two years. These documents will show what the board aims to do (policies) and also what it has done (the minutes). An annual review of the policies at a regular board meeting is helpful to all members, especially to new members.

2. Copies of any special reports on local school aims, achievements, and needs which have been submitted to the board in the last year or two should be given the new member.

3. Soon after his induction a new board member should be taken on a tour of the schools by the president and the superintendent. The tour should include every part of the school system in order to give the new member a birdseye view of the whole enterprise.

4. Selected publications of the State Department of Education relating to Colorado public education should be provided. The "Colorado School Laws" (1956 edition with annual supplement) should be included. One of the most helpful things a person can do to learn about his state school system is to read the school laws. A subscription to a good national periodical such as the "American School Board Journal" or "The Nation's Schools" helps one keep abreast of educational developments and problems.

5. The superintendent and the president should definitely encourage new members to attend a regional conference and the annual convention of the Colorado Association of School Boards. These meetings are especially designed to help board members improve both their knowledge of and competence in board work. Some other meetings of county, regional, or statewide importance may well be included in the plans. Of course other board members

should be active along this line, too. An appropriation in the budget should be made to cover the expenses of attending such meetings, if possible, so that board members are not required to pay out of their own pockets.

It is recommended that the board be represented at the annual convention of the National School Boards Association, as more Colorado boards are each year. However, if funds are limited, it is probably wiser to send an experienced member who has two or three years of his term left to serve, rather than a new member.

6. A good way for all board members, but especially new ones, to learn about the work of the schools is to schedule regular reports in person at one meeting a month by various workers in the schools. One month a committee of first grade teachers may report on how reading is taught; the next month teachers may be heard on physical education in the high school; the third month the science teachers may report on their work; and so on.

7. A great deal can also be learned from citizens' committees, properly set up to help the board analyze selected school problems and needs.

8. To see what other school systems are doing and to prevent the tendency to become provincial and narrow-minded, board members should visit other school systems. One or two excursions every year to see school buildings, visit a few classrooms, and perhaps sit in on a meeting of some other board will broaden a member's outlook.

There is a great deal of routine in school board work. The suggestions that have been made will keep one from going stale and will help make board work more interesting and stimulating.

### The Board Meeting

Although only four quarterly meetings are required by Colorado law, every board should hold at least one regular monthly meeting. If there is not enough business to justify a monthly meeting, the district is probably too small to warrant continued existence, or the board may be unaware of the scope of its responsibilities.

An increasing number of boards are meeting twice a month, the first meeting centered primarily on business affairs and the second on more strictly educational matters as indicated in point 6 of the preceding section.

It is highly desirable to schedule meetings for given days such as the second Wednesday or second and fourth Tuesdays, rather than dates. Most board members find it more convenient to attend evening meetings, and evening meetings are also more convenient for the public.

A notice should be sent to every member a few days ahead of the meeting, including the agenda drawn up by the superintendent

and president. It is good practice to have a news item announcing the meeting published in the local papers, for the information of citizens who may wish to attend.

A suitable meeting place should be provided in one of the school buildings. In large school systems a regular board room is usually provided, while in smaller systems the superintendent's office or an adjoining conference room may be used.

All board meetings should be open to the public, but school boards have the right, as do other public bodies, to go into executive or closed session for discussion of topics which should not be aired in public. Colorado law specifies, however, that no action may be taken in a closed session. Every motion must be made and acted upon in open meeting, and an alphabetic roll call vote is required for the record.

The law also requires that every Colorado board adopt a set of by-laws for the conduct of its work. An example of by-laws to meet the minimum requirement is included on page 53 in the appendix at the end of this booklet.

In the by-laws it would be wise to include a definite order of business for regular meetings. A suggested order of business used by many school boards includes these items:

1. Call to order
2. Roll call and declaration of a quorum (or lack of it)
3. Reading and approval of minutes, or approval without reading of minutes sent to members, or approval with amendments or changes.
4. Hearing of delegations (set early in the order of business so that delegations or petitioners will not be required to wait while the board does its other business)
5. Report of the superintendent (placed early because a large part of the board's business arises from his report and recommendations)
6. Unfinished business
7. New business
8. Communications
9. Miscellaneous items
10. Adjournment

Board meetings should be conducted in a businesslike way. If planned ahead of time and if the members stick to business, meetings can proceed with reasonable dispatch. If the board has so much business or works so slowly that meetings run longer than about three hours, it would be well to schedule more frequent meetings.

The place of the superintendent of schools in the board meeting is very important. Although he is not a member of the board and has no vote, he is the chief executive officer of the school system.

The board can not act in the wisest manner on the innumerable problems which come before it without the benefit of the superintendent's advice. His recommendations, supported by facts and professional judgement, should be sought on most items by the board and should be given much weight in its deliberations. The superintendent's recommendations need not be invariably adopted, but they do serve as a definite point of departure for the board's thinking. His recommendations should be followed unless very good reason for rejecting them develops in the consideration of a problem.

The common goal of all board members and their professional employees is the provision of the best possible schools for their community, state, and nation. By working together in a constructive, statesmanlike way, they stand a far better chance of having good schools than if they operate at cross-purposes or seek personal credit and advancement as individuals.

## *Section 6*

### *Community Relations Confronting Boards of Education Locally*







## *Section 6*

### COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND THE SCHOOL BOARD

(Harl R. Douglass, Director, College of Education, University of Colorado)

#### Board Responsibility for Public Relations

In recent years there has been an increased recognition of the importance of, and indeed the necessity for, a greater amount of time and attention being given by school officials and members of school boards to the problems of interpreting the school and its program to the people of the community and of developing interest in, and support for, public schools.

This increased interest in public relations has been accelerated by three developments: (1) The increased number of births in the later 1940's and in the 1950's, (2) the sensitivity of the people in general to increased taxes, and (3) the increased number and variety of criticisms of the schools which tend to mislead and confuse people and to undermine their faith in the public school and its program.

Members of the board of education, along with school staff and service employees, must find opportunities to inform as many individuals in the community as possible about the program, problems and needs of the school, and to make friends for public education.

#### Community Relations

Since the board of education is in a position to be informed about, and to understand the philosophy underlying the work and problems of the schools, members have an excellent opportunity, and a responsibility, for liaison between the professional people in the schools and the lay people of the community. The board should insist that, through the staff, they be kept well informed of the school's program, the general condition of the schools, new projects, and the prevailing philosophy as well as changes in the philosophy of education.

Members of the board may render valuable service by creating and exploiting opportunities for teachers, supervisors and administrators to meet individuals and groups in the community. There should be an effort to involve as many school people as possible in the life of the community. The board should encourage teachers and administrators alike to participate in civic associations, service clubs, church organizations, and other community groups.

In determining educational needs and desires of the community, the service of members of the board as liaison between the school and the community is a two-way street. In addition to as-

sisting in the interpretation of the program and problems of the schools to the community, they have an important responsibility for helping to interpret community needs and desires to school personnel.

In general, employees of the school system are not permanent community members. Teachers tend to move from district to district and consequently live somewhat apart from the adult life of the community. As a result, members of the school staff need to be kept informed about community reactions to the current program and procedure of the schools. The board may also need to interpret the attitudes of people in the community toward the program of the school, particularly in respect to changes in the current program. The school board should not be hesitant about bringing criticisms of the schools to the attention of the superintendent, to administrators, and to teachers.

Board members should accept and consider all reasonable criticisms of the program or the personnel of the schools, but these allegations should be supported by factual information, even if an investigation by the administrators of the school system is required. This has become particularly important because unfounded and inaccurate rumors and accusations have been, and are being, circulated about the schools and their achievements or lack of achievements.

While professional leaders in the schools usually propose solutions to the various problems of the school, the board should arrive at the decisions and recommendations to be made on the basis of full knowledge of the attitudes and desires of the community. It should be made clear, too, that the desires and opinions of all people in the community are important, not merely those of the professional and business group.

In order to accomplish this objective, board members should not be unduly sensitive or continually on the defensive. They should encourage all individuals to express themselves. Board members should do a great deal of listening. Arguments should, of course, be avoided as far as possible, but there are times when misinformed individuals should be given definite and more accurate information about the schools.

### **Board Relations to Special Groups and Individuals**

Naturally, the Parent-Teacher Association is one of the groups most interested in service to public schools. Members of the board of education should make it a point to attend the meetings of at least one PTA group, to keep informed, and to learn what the people of that organization are thinking about the schools.

The school board should be receptive to teachers' groups wishing to present, through their representatives, ideas with respect to schools, working conditions, and awards to the teachers themselves. This should apply to any group or organization enrolling a considerable number of teachers, such as a local unit of

the Colorado Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, or the Department of Classroom Teachers.

In most communities there will be special interest groups and organizations which may engage in activities intended to influence the schools. This is particularly true of organizations which are national or statewide in scope, and which desire their local groups to exert an active influence on the program of the school.

As a matter of good public relations, the school board should be willing to give time to consideration of the views of such groups. Nevertheless, the board, and the members individually, should resolve not to be swayed by groups with interests other than the improvement of the schools in general or the benefit of all youngsters. They must unanimously oppose any attempt to exert undue influence on the schools, particularly where pressure tactics are used.

The board and superintendent are advised to give serious consideration to the use of citizens' committees. Since 1949, when the National Citizens' Commission for Public Schools was formed, there have been more than 12,000 local citizens' committees appointed by boards of education. Most of these committees have rendered valuable service. In only a very few instances have citizens' committees attempted to usurp any of the powers and prerogatives of the local board of education. Instead, they have rendered service to the boards of education and have considered themselves strictly as advisory groups. It is much better for the board of education to establish or appoint citizens' committees, and to charge them with the responsibility for conducting studies and making recommendations to the board, than to have such committees arise spontaneously.

Citizens' committees should be set up for short terms of service, usually not more than a year, although the time may be extended in order to permit the committee to complete its study and considerations. A short, specified term serves as a stimulus to the committee to begin work at once upon its problems, and appeals to busy, competent people who would avoid an extended term of service. It is probably better for a citizens' committee to be appointed for a specific assignment—to study building, curriculum, financing, or problems of special services—rather than to serve in a general advisory capacity.

The citizens' committee should be a rather large and completely representative group. The individuals serving on a citizens' committee may be appointed by the board of education, or various organizations in the city may be asked to select representatives to serve on the committee, but care should be taken to see that the committee is representative of all types of groups in the school district.

Members of the board of education should encourage the



citizens' committee. They should make it a point to keep informed about its activities, to provide through the school staff whatever information the committee may need, and make available secretarial and clerical services. While teachers and principals may serve as members of citizens' committees, it is not necessary that they do so.

When the committee's work is finished, the board of education and appropriate administrators and teachers should sit in meetings, open to the public, to hear the recommendations of the committee and to ask questions. In many instances, the report of the citizens' committee ought to be published in the local newspapers, with appropriate comment and acknowledgement by the board of education.

### **The Press**

In recent years, administrators and boards of education have given much more attention to problems of public relations through the press. Colorado statutes now require that meetings of the board of education be open to the public (Sec. 123-10-20, 1953 C.R.S., Revised). However, the board may go into "executive session" and exclude all persons except those specifically invited when matters of a confidential nature are to be discussed. School boards must keep in mind that the function of the executive session is not to permit secret sessions, but rather to protect the school or individuals, and that no official action may be taken while the board is in executive session.

It is important to recognize the desirability of cooperating with the press in disseminating news. This means developing a continuous program of news releases which give facts about the school, its growth, and its progress, and information concerning its needs and problems. It should be recognized that the complete cooperation of the press may be obtained only when the board and school officials are willing to give facts not favorable to the schools, as well as those which are favorable.

Among the better boards of education it is becoming a standard practice to adopt a written policy with respect to working with the press. One of the important principles in such a policy has to do with the channels between the board and the press. Most commonly and desirably, boards of education invest their chief executive officer, the superintendent of schools, with the power to speak for the schools and the board of education in matters of official school business.

More than anything else, community relations become a continuous effort to communicate with the various publics of the school so that the community knows as much as possible about the practices, problems, and aspirations of the schools, and the staff and administration of the schools know what the community expects and how it interprets the work of the schools. Good public or community relations are based on honesty and mutual respect and are aimed at understanding, not high pressure salesmanship.

## *Section 7*

# *National and State Liaison Opportunities For Community Boards*





## Section 7

### NATIONAL AND STATE LIAISON OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY BOARDS

(John J. Coffelt, Executive Director, Colorado Association of School Boards)

#### Colorado Association of School Boards

The Colorado Association of School Boards was organized in January, 1940, as a voluntary association of elective school board members for the purpose of improving the quality and effectiveness of board service and administration of school board affairs. The purposes as set forth in the CASB Constitution are as follows:

- # To undertake the practical study of school problems
- # To gather and circulate helpful information obtained from the experience of school boards in action
- # To adopt those practices and procedures which result in the most economical and efficient operation of the schools
- # To secure the enactment of legislation which will be beneficial to the public schools, school children, and citizens of the state, and to oppose legislation injurious thereto
- # To hold conferences, conventions and workshops for the mutual exchange of ideas

The Association's program is based upon the philosophy that school directors have two basic responsibilities. *First*, the directors of a local board have the responsibility to provide the best possible educational program for the children of the district commensurate with the needs and financial ability of the school district. *Second*, as locally elected laymen, legally vested with this responsibility, board members accept a parallel responsibility to share in the development of state and national educational policy. It is through a state association of school boards that local school directors can fulfill this second responsibility.

The activities of the Association are determined and directed by the members themselves. Policies are formulated by rank and file members and are put into action by an Executive Committee of nine regional vice-presidents, elected by the entire membership. Each district, regardless of size, is entitled to one vote.

The Association is a non-partisan organization which is in no way connected with any political party. Its members seek only to improve public education, and not to protect selfish interests.

#### CASB Program

The Association is interested in serving the interests of its individual member districts. But beyond this, as a statewide organi-

zation it is vitally concerned in the improvement of education for the entire State. The Association has—

- # Made available to many districts results of studies concerning school insurance, teachers' salaries, cooperative purchasing, school district reorganization, by-laws, board policies, etc.
- # Promoted free interchange of ideas growing out of the practical experience of school board members.
- # Supported legislation for transportation, increased state aid, an improved Foundation program, reorganization of the State Department of Education, school district reorganization, compulsory attendance and special education. It has opposed legislation seeking to change the school board election date, compulsory publication of monthly expenditures, and proposals seeking to limit the autonomy of local boards of education.
- # Requested clarifying opinions from the Attorney General on controversial school laws, including a ruling which permits school districts to apply for a refund of the 2 per cent sales tax paid on material used in school construction.
- # Represented local districts at many legislative hearings, state conferences, and national meetings relating to public education.

Association services include—

- # Publication of the "Colorado School Board Bulletin," "Legal Calendar" and periodic legislative newsletters and announcements.
- # Circulation of information and research relating to school affairs and school board operation.
- # Holding of conferences for board members.
- # Liaison with state officials and state and national organizations and associations interested in public education.
- # Promotion of legislation to benefit schools.
- # Nationwide contacts.
- # An annual statewide convention for school board members.
- # Answering of inquiries.
- # Cooperation with other groups in the study of school problems.

As a member of the National School Boards Association since 1941, the CASB has had delegates in attendance at every national convention. Exchange of information with other state associations has been of benefit to individual members and has given national recognition to the services rendered by the Association.

## The National School Boards Association

The National School Boards Association is a federation of forty-eight state and two territorial associations (Alaska and Hawaii) of school board members. It is a non-profit organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois.

The central office of this organization is at 450 East Ohio Street, Chicago 11, Illinois. W. A. Shannon is executive secretary. The NSBA serves as a clearing house for information on schools from the many states. Local boards that are members of state associations can expect to obtain worthwhile help and information from the National Association.

The purposes of the National School Boards Association, as stated in its constitution and by-laws are:

- # To work for the general advancement of education for youth of the United States and its possessions
- # To study the educational program of the different states and disseminate this information
- # To work for the most efficient and effective organization of the public schools
- # To work for the adequate financial support of the public schools
- # To study educational legislation proposed in Congress to the end that the various state school board associations may be informed of such legislation

American school boards are the responsible governing bodies of our public schools. The National School Boards Association, through its membership, is responsible for all students enrolled in public elementary and public high schools throughout this country—more than thirty-three million students.





## *Appendix*



# Appendix

## SAMPLE BY-LAWS

The following set of sample by-laws has been prepared by the Colorado Association of School Boards as a guide to school boards in developing written by-laws as required by S. B. 104, School Laws 1957.

**Legal requirement which should be contained in the by-laws are shown in bold face print.** In addition, certain other recommended provisions have been included which the board may or may not care to incorporate in its own by-laws.

\* \* \*

Pursuant to Senate Bill No. 104, School Laws 1957 (Ch. 227, Colorado Session Laws 1957) the Board of Directors of .....  
(name of district), ..... School District No. ....  
..... County, Colorado, hereby adopts  
the following by-laws.

### ARTICLE I—MEETINGS

School board meetings shall be held at ..... (name of building) ....., located at ..... (address).....  
All board meetings shall be open to the public and all interested parties shall have the right to be present, except when the board is in executive session as hereinafter provided.

- (a) Regular meetings of the board shall be held at .....  
(time) ..... on the ..... (day of month, as second Tuesday) ..... of each month. (See footnote No. 1)

Whenever a regular meeting shall fall on a legal holiday, the board shall meet on the immediately following day.

- (b) **Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the school board may be called at any time by the president of the board, or by the secretary upon the request of two or more members of the board. In case of a special meeting, the secretary shall notify each director of the time and place of the special meeting. Only that business for which the special meeting was called may be considered at any special meeting, except that the board may, by unanimous consent of all members, act to consider other items at that time.

- (c) **Conduct of Meetings:** The president of the board, or, in his absence, the vice president of the board, shall serve as the chairman of each regular and special meeting of the board. (See footnote No. 2) Meetings shall be conducted according to established parliamentary procedure. In the event of question of order, Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall apply. In the event of further question, the ruling of the chairman shall be final.
- (d) **Order of Business.** The order of business at all regular meetings shall be as follows:
- (1) Call to Order
  - (2) Approval of Minutes
  - (3) Audiences
  - (4) Report of Superintendent
  - (5) Report of Secretary
  - (6) Report of Treasurer
  - (7) Claims and Accounts
  - (8) Unfinished Business
  - (9) New Business
  - (10) Miscellaneous Communications
  - (11) Adjournment

## ARTICLE II—VOTING

At school board meetings, all voting shall be done upon roll call. The names of the directors shall be called alphabetically and each member present shall vote "Yea" or "Nay" upon all questions unless excused from voting by the board for good cause. Voting by secret ballot shall be prohibited. All motions shall be declared lost unless approved by a majority of the directors present and their vote so recorded.

## ARTICLE III—GOVERNMENT OF DISTRICT SCHOOLS

The public schools of the district shall be governed in accordance with such written policies as the board shall adopt. Such written policies may be altered, amended or repealed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors at any regular or special meeting.

## ARTICLE IV—VACANCIES

Vacancies which may occur on the board shall be filled in a manner as prescribed by the laws of the State of Colorado. Absence from the district of any director or officer of the district, without leave of the board entered upon its minutes, when prolonged beyond thirty (30) consecutive days, may be held to work a vacancy in said office when so declared by the vote of a majority of the remaining members of the board.

## ARTICLE V—EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon the vote of a majority of the board members present, the board may go into executive session, at which time only such persons as the board may invite may be present during the executive session. However, no voting shall be done in said executive session.

## ARTICLE VI—QUORUM

A majority of the entire Board of Directors then in office shall be necessary at all meetings to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## ARTICLE VII—OFFICERS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The officers of the Board of Directors shall be a president, a secretary and a treasurer, who shall be elected and perform the duties as prescribed by the laws of the State of Colorado.

## ARTICLE VIII—AMENDMENTS

Alterations, amendments or repeals of these by-laws may be made by the Board of Directors by a majority vote of the entire Board of Directors at any regular or special meeting, provided notice of such alteration, amendment or repeal has been given to each director, in writing, at least three (3) days prior to said meeting, and provided further that they are not inconsistent with the laws of the State of Colorado.

KNOW ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, That we, the undersigned, the duly elected members of the Board of Education of said School District, do hereby certify that the within and foregoing By-laws were adopted on the..... day of ..... 19....., and that the same do constitute the By-laws of School District No. ....

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we hereunto subscribe our names.

\_\_\_\_\_  
President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Adopted

\* \* \* \* \*

Footnote No. 1. Boards may elect to specify the months in which regular meetings are to be held, except that there must be at least one meeting in each of the months of March, June, September and December.

Footnote No. 2. In the absence of the president, in second and third class districts the secretary presides at board and district meetings. (123-10-33 School Laws 1956)





## THE UNSUNG HERO

Some folks win fame and glory by increasing human knowledge,  
While others, with more ducats, endow some struggling college;  
Some help to purify the world by selling brooms and mops  
And others push humanity by being traffic cops.  
A combination of all these is he who serves the nation  
By giving time and effort on a board of education.

No crowds attend his utterances, no cheers attest his fame,  
But should the home team fumble, he gets much of the blame.  
And even if the team should win, he hears no trumpet call;  
He is struggling with some parent whose off-spring dropped the  
ball.

He earns no fame for wisdom or for his staying powers,  
As he struggles in committees through the early morning hours.  
Or if a building site is picked, with argument and woe,  
Do men rise up and praise him? The answer, friends, is "No."  
And when the budget is announced, the people scowl and frown.  
For half the voters want it up and half demand it down.

All praise to thee, O worthy friend, for service rendered well.  
No matter how you toil and slave, some folks are bound to yell.  
So pay them no attention but go your troubled way  
And do your honest duty—let the chips fall where they may.  
Some day the crowds will gather with laudatory shout  
And when the votes are counted, you will find that you are out!

—Frederick J. Moffit

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